

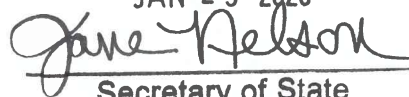


GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

January 29, 2026

The Honorable Jane Nelson  
Secretary of State  
State Capitol, Room 1E.8  
Austin, Texas 78701

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TEXAS SECRETARY OF STATE  
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JAN 29 2026  
  
Secretary of State

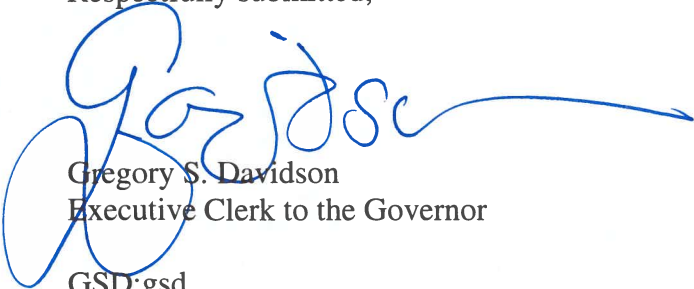
Dear Secretary Nelson:

Pursuant to his powers as Governor of the State of Texas, Greg Abbott has issued the following:

A proclamation certifying that the northward spread of a parasitic fly commonly known as the New World Screwworm from Central and South America toward the U.S. southern border threatens the state's livestock industry and economy and poses an imminent threat of widespread and severe property damage and declaring a state of disaster for all Texas counties.

The original proclamation is attached to this letter of transmittal.

Respectfully submitted,



Gregory S. Davidson  
Executive Clerk to the Governor

GSD:gsd

Attachment

# PROCLAMATION

BY THE

## Governor of the State of Texas

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TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

WHEREAS, the New World screwworm (NWS), also known as *Cochliomyia hominivorax*, is a parasitic fly primarily found in South America, Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic; and

WHEREAS, NWS larvae infest and feed on the living tissue of warm-blooded animals, including livestock and wildlife, which can cause serious and deadly damage to an animal; and

WHEREAS, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reported that within the last two years, NWS has spread from Panama into Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Belize, and now Mexico; and

WHEREAS, on November 22, 2024, the Chief Veterinary Officer of Mexico notified the USDA of a positive detection of NWS in Mexico; and

WHEREAS, on November 22, 2024, USDA suspended cattle and bison imports from Mexico after a positive detection of NWS in southern Mexico; and

WHEREAS, on February 1, 2025, USDA resumed the import of cattle and bison from Mexico after USDA and Mexico agreed to, and implemented, a comprehensive pre-clearance inspection and treatment protocol to ensure safe movement and mitigate the threat of NWS; and

WHEREAS, on May 11, 2025, USDA suspended live cattle, horse, and bison imports from Mexico after NWS was detected in Central Mexico, about 700 miles from the Texas border; and

WHEREAS, on June 18, 2025, USDA announced a five-prong plan to address NWS, including the launch of an \$8.5 million sterile NWS fly dispersal facility in South Texas to aid in eliminating any presence of the pest in Mexico in close proximity to the U.S. southern border; and

WHEREAS, I, GREG ABBOTT, Governor of the State of Texas, on June 25, 2025, directed the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to establish a joint Texas New World Screwworm Response Team to lead Texas's prevention and response efforts, ensure that Texas remains informed, prepared, and aligned to prevent the re-emergence of this destructive parasite, and to serve as "the central hub for coordination, information-sharing, and stakeholder engagement among state, federal, and industry partners"; and

WHEREAS, on July 9, 2025, USDA halted a phased channeling strategy for re-opening ports for the importation of cattle, bison, and equines from Mexico and suspended all livestock trade through southern ports of entry after receiving reports of NWS in Ixhuatlán de Madero, Veracruz, Mexico—approximately 370 miles from the southern border; and

WHEREAS, I, GREG ABBOTT, Governor of the State of Texas, on August 15, 2025, alongside USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins, announced a \$750 million USDA investment in a new Domestic Sterile Screwworm Production Facility in Edinburg, Texas, with capacity to produce 300 million sterile flies per week to combat the northward spread of NWS; and

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WHEREAS, on September 21, 2025, USDA reported a new case of NWS in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León, Mexico, less than 70 miles from the southern border; and

WHEREAS, on October 17, 2025, USDA released its NWS Response Playbook, which, in part, outlines strategies for federal, state, and local governments to coordinate response and communications related to NWS, and to prevent and contain outbreaks of NWS, including through NWS surveillance and management strategies; and

WHEREAS, on November 21, 2025, USDA launched screwworm.gov to centralize NWS information across the federal government, including up-to-date information on verified NWS reports, official response activities taken in U.S. preparedness efforts, resources for livestock producers, veterinarians, animal health officials, healthcare providers, and the general public; and

WHEREAS, Section 161.041, Texas Agriculture Code, grants TAHC authority to protect all livestock from diseases, eradicate or control any disease or agent that could affect livestock, and, in the event of a conflict of authority between state agencies, to assume the responsibility for disease control efforts; and

WHEREAS, Section 161.0417, Texas Agriculture Code, requires any person engaging in an activity that is part of a state or federal disease control or eradication program for animals to be authorized by TAHC, subject to suspension or revocation of such authorization; and

WHEREAS, Section 161.101, Texas Agriculture Code, requires any person having care, custody, or control of an animal to report to TAHC the existence of diseases listed in rules adopted by TAHC among livestock within 24 hours after diagnosis of the disease; and

WHEREAS, TAHC has designated NWS as a reportable and actionable disease and agent of disease transmission pursuant to Title 4, Texas Administrative Code § 45.3(c)(1)(P); and

WHEREAS, Section 161.0416, Texas Agriculture Code, authorizes TAHC to prepare and plan for disaster events that may affect livestock, including disease outbreaks; and

WHEREAS, TAHC, as the lead agency tasked with monitoring and combatting NWS, has met weekly with USDA to coordinate federal and state response efforts; and

WHEREAS, TAHC has participated in 243 speaking engagements with industry groups, local and state government officials, and the public to spread awareness of NWS, hosted veterinary specific education events, and reached approximately 328,810 individuals through digital platform initiatives; and

WHEREAS, TAHC has conducted five multi-day field response and tactical level trainings with TPWD, USDA, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, and Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association staff; and

WHEREAS, TAHC partnered with USDA on surveillance along the Texas-Mexico border by working with landowners to deploy NWS specific surveillance traps along the Texas-Mexico border; and

WHEREAS, the Texas New World Screwworm Response Team has coordinated state response plan priorities across wildlife and livestock sectors, has facilitated information

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sharing and notifications of key preparedness and current event announcements, and has strategized effective preparedness and response measures to safeguard Texans and maintain continuity of business while effectively responding to the threat posed by NWS; and

WHEREAS, unified state and federal action is essential to prevent the spread of NWS and to ensure consistent public messaging, swift mobilization of response assets, and effective biosecurity measures to protect Texas livestock, wildlife, and agricultural industries; and

WHEREAS, the dissemination of false or misleading information related to NWS preparedness efforts poses serious risks to Texans, wildlife, and livestock, and threatens the stability of Texas's agricultural economy; and

WHEREAS, the recent migration of NWS into Northern Mexico presents an imminent threat of danger and injury to the Texas agricultural industry; and

WHEREAS, Section 418.011, Texas Government Code, statutorily empowers the governor to meet "the dangers to the state and people presented by disasters"; and

WHEREAS, Section 418.004(1), Texas Government Code, defines "disaster" as "the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe ... loss of life or property resulting from any natural or man-made cause, including ... infestation ... [or] other public calamity requiring emergency action"; and

WHEREAS, Section 418.014, Texas Government Code, authorizes "[t]he governor, by executive order or proclamation," to "declare a state of disaster if the governor finds... that the ... threat of disaster is imminent"; and

WHEREAS, Section 418.012, Texas Government Code, authorizes the governor to issue proclamations that have the force and effect of law; and

WHEREAS, Section 418.016, Texas Government Code, authorizes the governor to "suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business or the orders or rules of a state agency if strict compliance with the provisions, orders, or rules would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with a disaster"; and

WHEREAS, Section 418.017, Texas Government Code, authorizes the governor to "temporarily reassign resources, personnel, or functions of state executive departments and agencies or their units for the purpose of performing and facilitating emergency services"; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GREG ABBOTT, Governor of Texas, do hereby certify that the spread of NWS northward from Mexico toward the U.S. southern border threatens Texas' livestock industry and economy and poses an imminent threat of widespread and severe property damage and pursuant to Section 418.014, Texas Government Code, declare a state of disaster for all Texas counties.

Pursuant to Section 418.017, Texas Government Code, I authorize the use of all available resources of state government and of all political subdivisions that are reasonably necessary to cope with this disaster, and temporarily reassign any such resources that have been, or could be, allocated to address the spread of NWS to the Texas New World Screwworm Response Team, headed by TAHC and TPWD.

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Pursuant to Sections 418.012 and 418.016, Texas Government Code, any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business or any order or rule of a state agency that would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with this disaster shall be suspended or superseded upon written approval of the Office of the Governor. However, to the extent the enforcement of any state statute or administrative rule regarding contracting or procurement would impede any state agency's emergency response that is necessary to protect life or property threatened by this declared disaster, I hereby authorize the suspension or superseding of such statutes and rules for the duration of this declared disaster.


In accordance with statutory requirements, copies of this proclamation shall be filed with the applicable authorities.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and have officially caused the Seal of State to be affixed at my office in the City of Austin, Texas, this the 29th day of January, 2026.

  
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GREG ABBOTT  
Governor

ATTESTED BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JANE NELSON  
Secretary of State

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